

Minutes

Sunderland City Council

At a meeting of SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL held in the MONTGOMERY SUITE, STADIUM OF LIGHT, SUNDERLAND on WEDNESDAY 23 JUNE 2021 at 4.00pm

Present: The Mayor (Councillor H Trueman) in the Chair
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor A Smith)

Councillors	Ali	Foster	Mason-Gage	Smith, P
	Bewick	Gibson, E	McClennan	Snowdon, D
	Blackburn	Gibson, P W L	McDonough	Snowdon, D E
	Blackett	Gibson, P	McKeith	Speding
	Burnicle	Greener	Miller, F	Stewart
	Butler	Hartnack	Miller, G	Taylor, A
	Chequer	Haswell	Morrissey	Thornton
	Crosby	Heron	Mullen	Trueman, D
	Dixon	Hodson	Nicholson	Turner
	Dodds	Howe	Noble	Tye
	Donaghy	Jenkins	O'Brien	Walker, M
	Doyle	Johnston, K	Peacock	Walker, P
	Dunn	Johnston, S	Potts	Warne
	Edgeworth	Lauchlan	Price	Williams
	Essl	Laws	Reed	Wilson
	Fagan	MacKnight, D	Rowntree	Wood, A
	Farthing	MacKnight, N	Samuels	Wood, P
	Fletcher	Mann	Scanlan	

Also Present:-

Honorary Alderman Greenfield

The notice convening the meeting was read.

Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Leadbitter and G Smith together with Aldermen Arnott, Forbes and Tate.

Minutes

- 5. RESOLVED that** the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 19 May 2021 be confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to an amendment to the voting record on page 11 of the Minutes to show that Councillor Dodds voted *against* the amendment and *for* the substantive motion and that Councillor Reed voted *for* the amendment and *against* the substantive motion.

Declaration of Interests

The following declarations of interest were made and the Members concerned left the meeting during consideration of the item: -

Councillor G Miller	Item 15(ii) – Notice of Motion – Newcastle Airport	Director of Newcastle International Airport LA Holding Company Ltd Alternate Director of Newcastle International Airport LA Holding Company Ltd
Councillor C Rowntree		

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Covid-19 – Verbal Update by the Leader of the Council

The Mayor invited the Leader to provide a verbal update on the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Leader provided a further update on the ongoing situation and commented that it had been hoped that this week would see the final step in the easing of Covid restrictions but this had been delayed. The situation was frustrating and disappointing but the public's health had to come first and the region's infection rates were a cause for concern.

The Leader highlighted that the Delta variant was causing Covid cases to increase and urged people to continue to take up the vaccine which had been confirmed to be highly effective against the variant and would slow the spread of the virus. The Council was doing all it could to support the NHS in delivering vaccinations as quickly as possible and was emphasising that people should keep to the current rules and guidance in relation to hands-face-space, meeting up with others and working from home where possible.

The Leader advised that the Council was working with the Government on potential measures tailored to the region's needs and circumstances, including access to their communication channels and further localisation of Test and Trace. Clarity was also being sought on the extension of any national schemes to support the business community and parts of the economy most affected.

The Leader expressed his pride in the people of the city who had taken responsibility and done the right thing in the face of the latest threat and paid tribute to the council teams who had gone the extra mile and more over the last 16 months.

There continued to be huge pressure on Council services and resources and the Leader asked Members to provide support in referring to the comprehensive information on the Council's Covid web pages and avoiding non-essential demands on officers so that they were able to focus on supporting residents, businesses and communities.

In closing, the Leader thanked everyone playing a part in the battle against Covid-19 and made a plea for people to keep this going by taking good care, remaining vigilant and following the rules. The Council would continue to communicate with residents on the latest situation and would keep on updating and sharing information, advice and guidance. Communities would be supported in overcoming the challenges that the pandemic continued to present and the Council would keep on forging ahead with its plans to create a fantastic city with opportunities for all residents.

6. RESOLVED that the update from the Leader be noted.

Citywide approach to carbon reduction – Verbal update by the Deputy Leader of the Council

The Deputy Leader provided an update on the ongoing progress being made in relation to the city's goal of being carbon neutral by 2030 and reducing its carbon emissions.

The Deputy Leader advised that Council's 2030 Task Group continued to be very active on initiatives to drive forward carbon reduction and to deliver against the Council's Action Plan. The Action Plan supported delivery of the city-wide Low Carbon Framework which was adopted by partners in December 2020 and endorsed by Cabinet in January 2021. Examples of recent work included the following: -

- Sunderland, together with South Tyneside, Gateshead and the Durham Wildlife Trust had been awarded a total of £250,000 funding from the National Lottery Green Recovery Challenge Fund. Sunderland's portion of funds would be used to upgrade ten Local Wildlife Sites in the city;
- The bid with partners in Tyne and Wear and County Durham to create a new North East Community Forest was progressing well and a decision was expected by the end of July. In addition, 75 trees had been generously donated to the city by Haskel Energy Systems for Earth Day and these trees had been planted within the grounds of Southwick Primary School and also at Southwick Cemetery;
- £300,000 revenue grant funding had been awarded from the Government's Capability Fund to promote sustainable transport options throughout 2021;
- Through the Department for Transport's Active Travel Fund, Sunderland had been awarded just over £1m to upgrade the National Cycle Network along the coast at Roker, subject to the outcome of successful consultation. A Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for the city was also being developed and would be presented to Cabinet in the near future;
- The Government's Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (or OZEV) had also awarded the Council £69,300 of grant funding to deliver on-street residential EV charging infrastructure.

The Deputy Leader highlighted that a new e-Collect all-electric Refuse Collection Vehicle had been delivered and had begun its rounds on the 8 June. Sunderland has been selected to be part of a European peer learning programme linked to the Covenant of Mayors. Sunderland had been matched with a local authority in both Spain and Italy to share learning and expertise, with the city-wide approach through the development of the Low Carbon Framework having been identified as a particular strength.

Research had been commissioned to engage with both residents and businesses, to gain insight into their current understanding and behaviours relating to low carbon best practice and to shape the development of engagement and communication activity. Six key groups had been identified around which to focus the activity, these were: residents; children and young people; the voluntary and community sector; partners; businesses, and employees.

The Deputy Leader reported that a key step to date was the proposal to establish a city-wide Young People's Advisory Group. This had been agreed by all partners and work had begun with Together for Children, Sunderland College and the University to develop the group and ensure that the city's young people would help to shape and lead it.

The Leader had given a presentation on low carbon to Sunderland College students people as part of their recent student-led Green Conference, raising awareness of the city-wide approach and of the key role that young people had to play in this important agenda.

The Deputy Leader stated that internal communication actions were also progressing well, low carbon was included monthly in Workwise Bitesize and a new employer social network platform was to be created which be used to share low carbon messages.

The Deputy Leader advised that she would continue to provide updates to Council as appropriate going forward and accordingly it was: -

7. RESOLVED that the information be noted.

Reception of Petitions

8. RESOLVED that the petitions listed below submitted by the Councillors named be received and referred for consideration in accordance with the Council's Petitions Scheme: -

Councillor Mullen – Petition opposing the proposed housing development on the field in front of Princetown Terrace/land east of Primate Road;

Councillor Edgeworth – Petition calling on the Council to create a safe, ground level crossing at Hastings Hill so that people do not have to use the existing subway;

Councillor Heron – Petition calling on the Council to investigate excessive noise at Rainton Arena; and

Councillor Mann – Petition regarding vehicular access at Birchberry Close, St Anne's ward.

Written Questions by Members of the Public (if any) under Rule 10

Pursuant to Rule 10 of the Council Rules of Procedure, the Leader and Members of the Cabinet were asked questions which had been submitted by members of the public.

Written Questions by Members of the Council (if any) under Rule 11

There were no questions to be considered under Rule 11 of the Council Rules of Procedure.

Area Arrangements Annual Report 2020/2021

The Executive Director of Neighbourhoods submitted the Area Arrangements Annual Report which summarised the work of the five area committees during 2020/2021.

Councillor Williams, duly seconded by Councillor P Walker, moved the Area Arrangements Annual Report and accordingly it was: -

9. **RESOLVED that** the achievements and impact of the work of the Area Committees and their supporting Neighbourhood and Community Board during 2020/2021 as outlined in the Annual Report be received and noted.

Scrutiny Annual Report 2020/2021

The Assistant Director of Law and Governance submitted the Scrutiny Annual Report which summarised the work of the scrutiny committees during 2020/2021.

Councillor D MacKnight, duly seconded by Councillor D E Snowdon, moved the Scrutiny Annual Report and accordingly it was: -

10. **RESOLVED that** the report on the operation of the scrutiny function for 2020/2021 be received and noted.

Action taken on petitions

The Council received and noted the report below which detailed the action taken in relation to the following petitions which had been presented to the Council.

- (i) **Petition requesting Council to consider introducing traffic calming to Vicarage Road, Cumberland Road and Lincoln Avenue - presented by Councillor Tye on 23 September 2020**

The petition had highlighted that the roads had become a rat run and suggested that possible measures could include reduction in the speed limit, traffic calming measures and review of the bus types being used to service the roads.

Officers had investigated the matter and advised that Nexus was the authority that decided on the operation, routes and size of vehicle for their bus services. The Passenger Transport Executive had been consulted with regards to the bus services and had confirmed that the mini link service ceased to operate in 2011 as passenger demand had increased.

The area which was the subject of the petition was residential with most residents parking their vehicles on-street. The road linked Warwick Terrace to Silksworth Road and was subject to a 30mph speed limit. There had been no injury accidents recorded on this stretch of road.

Following consideration by Council Officers, it was agreed that consideration would be given to reducing the speed limit to 20mph prior to the introduction of physical traffic calming measures in the first instance. Any scheme considered will be subject to consultation.

This location would be added to those being considered for the introduction of a 20mph speed limit in the next prioritisation exercise scheduled to take place in the coming months.

The Ward Councillors and lead petitioner had been advised of the outcome.

(ii) Petition requesting Council to reduce the speed limit and install other traffic calming measures in Atkinson Road and surrounding streets – presented by Councillor Doyle on 18 November 2020

Officers had investigated the matter and noted that the streets suggested were residential streets which were heavily parked with private vehicles. The road was a 30mph road and linked Fulwell Road to Mere Knolls Road. A recent speed survey showed that the average speed of traffic was travelling at around 20mph and no accidents had been recorded on this street where speeding was a contributory factor.

Following consideration by Council Officers, it was agreed that consideration would be given to reducing the speed limit to 20mph prior to the introduction of physical traffic calming measures in the first instance. It would be decided in the coming weeks which areas to take forward into the next programme for 20mph schemes and any scheme considered would be subject to consultation.

The Ward Councillors and lead petitioner had been advised of the outcome.

(iii) Petition requesting Council to consult with local residents regarding the installation of double yellow lines and a Community Parking Management Scheme (CPMS) on Seafields and the 'royal streets' – presented by Councillor Doyle on 18 November 2020

It was highlighted that a potential CPMS had been identified for Seafields and the new residential estate currently being developed which would be funded by the development funding as part of their agreement. Part of this funding could be utilised to consider traffic management measures in the 'royal streets'.

Following consideration by Council Officers, it was agreed that consideration would be given to the measures requested when a scheme was developed in the future and will be subject to consultation.

The Ward Councillors and lead petitioner had been advised of the outcome.

Special Urgency Decisions

The Leader of the Council submitted a quarterly report on executive decisions which had been taken as a matter of special urgency. There had been no such instances since the last report.

11. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies

The Assistant Director of Law and Governance submitted a report seeking approval for a number of proposed changes to various committees and outside bodies which had arisen since the Annual Council meeting.

The Leader of the Council, duly seconded by the Deputy Leader, moved the report and accordingly it was: -

12. RESOLVED that: -

- (i) the appointment of Dr Martin Weatherhead and Chief Superintendent Sarah Pitt to the Health and Wellbeing Board be noted and endorsed;
- (ii) the appointment of Councillors R Elvin and D Geddis as the Hetton Town Council representatives to serve on the Standards Committee be noted and endorsed; and
- (iii) Councillors Greener and A Wood be appointed to the vacant positions on the Green Terrace Primary School Trust.

Approval of Reason for Absence from Meetings

This report was withdrawn.

Notices of Motion

The Leader of the Council, Councillor G Miller, duly seconded by the Deputy Leader, Councillor Rowntree, moved the suspension of Council Procedure Rules 12.1 and 14.1 so far as they required the signing and delivering of a notice of motion to be carried out in person.

13. RESOLVED that the suspension of the relevant Council Procedure Rules be agreed.

(i) Seeking an end to “Fire and Rehire” tactics by employers

The Leader of the Council, Councillor G Miller, duly seconded by Councillor Farthing moved the following motion: -

“This Council notes the increased use by employers in the UK of fire and rehire tactics, forcing their staff to accept worse terms/conditions, leaving many having to work longer hours and for lower pay.

That while the Prime Minister has called the practice “unacceptable” he has continually refused to take action to outlaw the practice, raising concerns that he will not intervene in this race to the bottom by some employers.

This Council therefore believes actions are required to ensure local residents are protected against such unscrupulous employers and agrees to:

- Ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Prime Minister demanding he act now and keep his promise to local residents to protect their employment terms and conditions
- Promote the increasing number of progressive local employers prioritising their employees wellbeing by becoming a REAL living wage employer.
- Work with our anchor institutions and key partners to bring forward plans for the introduction of a local employer charter for companies to work toward, with Trade Union rights, support for the TUC great jobs agenda and paying the REAL living wage at its heart.”

On the motion being put, it was declared to be carried unanimously and it was: -

14. RESOLVED that: -

This Council notes the increased use by employers in the UK of fire and rehire tactics, forcing their staff to accept worse terms/conditions, leaving many having to work longer hours and for lower pay.

That while the Prime Minister has called the practice “unacceptable” he has continually refused to take action to outlaw the practice, raising concerns that he will not intervene in this race to the bottom by some employers.

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- Ask the Leader of the Council to write to the Prime Minister demanding he act now and keep his promise to local residents to protect their employment terms and conditions
- Promote the increasing number of progressive local employers prioritising their employees wellbeing by becoming a REAL living wage employer.
- Work with our anchor institutions and key partners to bring forward plans for the introduction of a local employer charter for companies to work toward, with Trade Union rights, support for the TUC great jobs agenda and paying the REAL living wage at its heart.

(ii) Newcastle Airport

Councillor Hodson, duly seconded by Councillor Edgeworth, moved the following motion: -

“This Council resolves to write to Newcastle International Airport to urge its directors to rename the airport ‘Newcastle Sunderland International Airport.’”

Councillor Stewart, duly seconded by Councillor Williams, moved the following amendment: -

After “urge its directors to”

- Delete “rename the airport Newcastle Sunderland International Airport”
- Add “consider suitable options for renaming the airport that will best reflect the area it serves”

So the amended motion would read: -

“This Council resolves to write to Newcastle International Airport to urge its directors to consider suitable options for renaming the airport that will best reflect the area it serves.”

Upon being put, the amendment was declared to be carried unanimously. The substantive motion, as amended, was put to the meeting and accordingly it was: -

15. RESOLVED that: -

This Council resolves to write to Newcastle International Airport to urge its directors to consider suitable options for renaming the airport that will best reflect the area it serves.

(iii) Back Lanes

Councillor Mullen, duly seconded by Councillor Greener, moved the following motion: -

“Council recognises the need to take action to improve the condition of residential back lanes across the city.

Back lanes often look untidy and uninviting, as well as attracting fly-tipping issues, anti-social behaviour, and speeding and parking problems.

To improve the state of back lanes for local residents, Council agrees to learn from the Reclaim the Lanes project and undertake the following actions:

- To launch a public consultation among residents with back lanes to understand their concerns and preferred solutions, and to report back to each Area Committee;
- To subsequently identify a number of pilot areas across the city to implement the solutions and ideas identified by residents;

- To conduct an audit of how many waste bins and dog bins are currently in the vicinity of residential areas with multiple back lanes.”

Councillor Rowntree, duly seconded by Councillor Stewart, moved the following amendment: -

After Second Bullet point add additional one as follows:

“To support residents who may look to increase social and environmental benefits with proposals to turn lanes into useable outdoor space for growing plants and socialising”

Amend final bullet point as follows:

Delete: “To conduct an audit of how many waste bins and dog bins are currently”

Add: “As part of the current city wide audit of waste and dog bins, to review additional need”

So that the amended motion would read: -

“Council recognises the need to take action to improve the condition of residential back lanes across the city.

Back lanes often look untidy and uninviting, as well as attracting fly-tipping issues, anti-social behaviour, and speeding and parking problems.

To improve the state of back lanes for local residents, Council agrees to learn from the Reclaim the Lanes project and undertake the following actions:

- To launch a public consultation among residents with back lanes to understand their concerns and preferred solutions, and to report back to each Area Committee;
- To subsequently identify a number of pilot areas across the city to implement the solutions and ideas identified by residents;
- To support residents who may look to increase social and environmental benefits with proposals to turn lanes into useable outdoor space for growing plants and socialising
- As part of the current city wide audit of waste and dog bins, to review additional need in the vicinity of residential areas with multiple back lanes.”

Upon being put, the amendment was declared to be carried unanimously. The substantive motion, as amended, was put to the meeting and accordingly it was: -

16. RESOLVED that: -

Council recognises the need to take action to improve the condition of residential back lanes across the city.

Back lanes often look untidy and uninviting, as well as attracting fly-tipping issues, anti-social behaviour, and speeding and parking problems.

To improve the state of back lanes for local residents, Council agrees to learn from the Reclaim the Lanes project and undertake the following actions:

- To launch a public consultation among residents with back lanes to understand their concerns and preferred solutions, and to report back to each Area Committee;
- To subsequently identify a number of pilot areas across the city to implement the solutions and ideas identified by residents;
- To support residents who may look to increase social and environmental benefits with proposals to turn lanes into useable outdoor space for growing plants and socialising
- As part of the current city wide audit of waste and dog bins, to review additional need in the vicinity of residential areas with multiple back lanes.

(Signed) H TRUEMAN
Mayor

